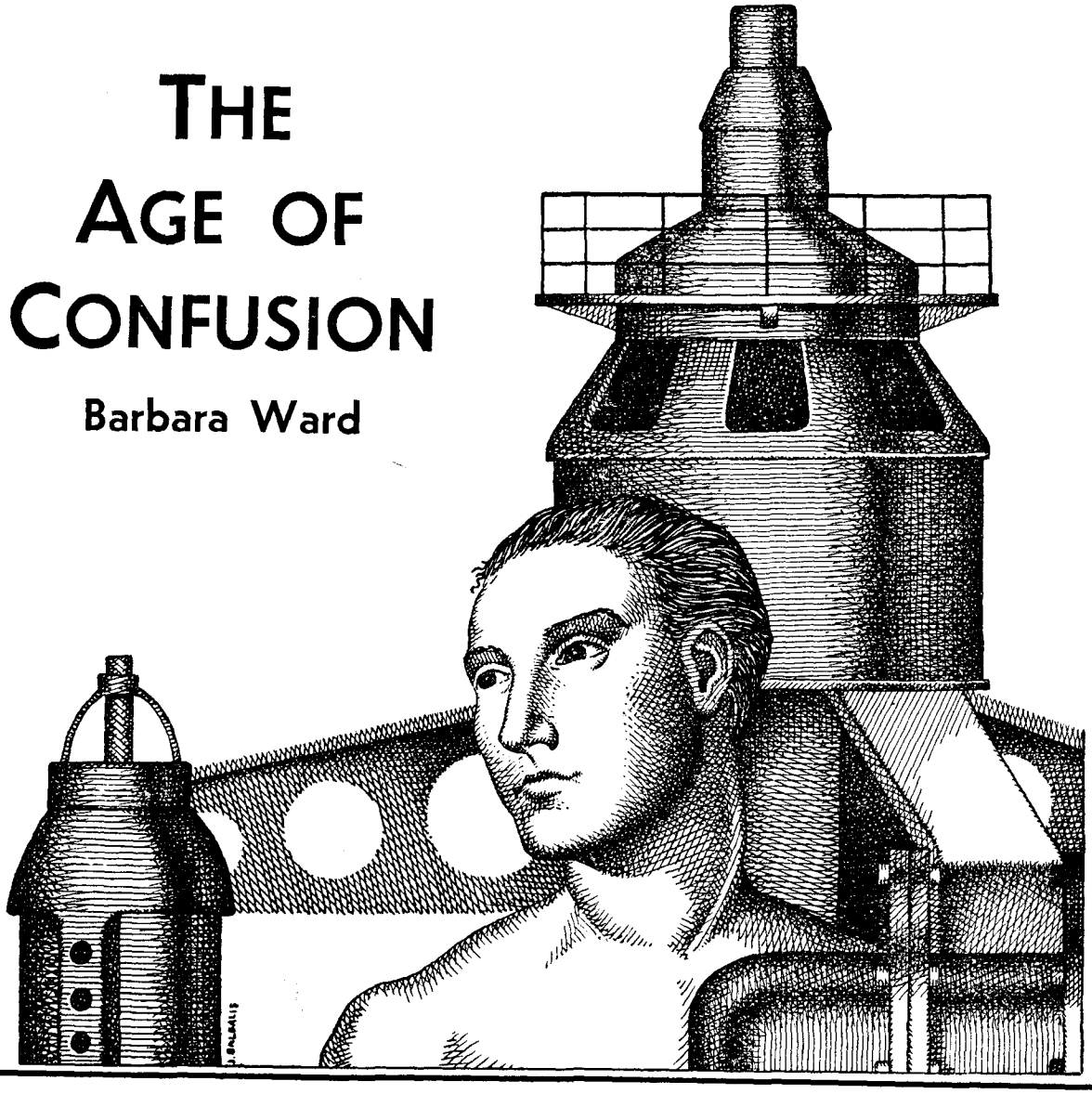
THE PASSING OF AN ERA
– John C. Cort

THE

Commonweal

THE AGE OF CONFUSION

Barbara Ward



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THE Commonweal

week by week

OUTLOOK FOR KOREA

CITIZENS who expect anything very startling to result from General Eisenhower's trip to Korea appear to be riding for a fall. News of his presence will hardly bring on a precipitate enemy retreat, while the General himself is too experienced a commander to counsel moves that would lead to military disaster for the UN forces. At most, it would seem, the training of South Koreans will be stepped up somewhat. And it must not be overlooked that the creation of a modern fighting force is a matter of years.

Mr. Vishinsky is as adamant as ever before the UN on the subject of the repatriation of all prisoners without exception. Mr. Eden, the latest spokesman for the West, is equally firm in rejecting forced repatriation. For such an impasse there is no middle ground. India's proposal of November 17, the last of a long series of neutral proposals, simply postpones the real issue of forced repatriation (to imprisonment and death).

The idea that the prisoner issue is but a Russian pretext for prolonging a war desired by the Soviets fits in well with American war-weariness. It is seized upon by fathers of teen-age sons apprehensive that the war will still be going on by the time boys of today reach military age. The Presidential campaign itself served to heighten convictions that Korea is strategically worthless, that the Soviet Union has us in a trap where it intends to keep us—expending the flower of our youth and depleting our military might.

On this theory the UN forces either should break out of the trap and carry the war directly to Communist China or withdraw from Korea entirely. The latter alternative would temporarily be immensely popular in the United States.

Few Americans confronted with the inescapable effects of extending the war to China itself, however, would persist long in entertaining that perilous idea. The pressure comes rather from those who rose to the campaign slogan about leaving the defense of Asia largely in the hands of Asiatics.

Such sentiment recalls the widespread demand to "bring the boys home" prematurely from World War II. Both Democratic and Republican politicians gave in to their constituents and heeded the popular outcry. As a result, Soviet Russia was able to embark on a series of postwar conquests in Eastern Europe with little to impede her. Proposals inspired by war-weariness have to be scrutinized with utmost care in this embattled world.

That the Korean Peninsula has no substantial strategic value for the defense of Japan and other still-free areas of the Far East is arguable at best. It is even more debatable whether the Korean war does not serve as a proportionately greater drain on Communist China than it does on the United States. Some interpretations of Russian strategy would, in fact, have it that the Kremlin likes the war because it makes a potential and ancient rival weaker and greatly dependent upon the USSR.

BUT the principal reason for not withdrawing from Korea has other roots. Resistance to the attack in Korea was the free world's answer to further Soviet aggression. Withdrawal now would mean a fatal backing down. Even if it were not followed immediately by Communist seizure of Southeast Asia, it would mean that any lasting security had vanished for all independent nations. That is at stake in the bloody conflict in Korea.

That is why resistance must go on despite its tragic consequences: thousands upon thousands of casualties; mountainous taxes and a growing national debt; the pulverizing of Korea and the travail of its people; the postponing of many needed developments in the world. For the United Nations to back down now would mean greater miseries not only for those now directly concerned but it would spread such miseries to ever wider areas. Whatever the final solution of the conflict, the free world cannot countenance an armistice arrived at by capitulating to terms laid down by the relentless Soviet Union. For that would be a mortal blow to human liberty in our time.

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WEAKENING THE WALLS

FOR the Northerner, there is nothing easier than seeing the evils of the Jim Crow system in the South. Conversely, few things make the Southerner feel more righteous than an incident like the disgraceful Cicero rioting in the North.

A large part of the problem in this matter stems from the fact that we so easily accept the familiar without question. The black ghettos of the North have existed for many years, and by and large most Northerners take them for granted, without thinking much about them. And all too often when the accepted way is in danger, the prospective change is greeted with resentment and sometimes with violence.

So it is in the South with segregation. To the visitor from the other side of the Mason Dixon line, segregation is a fact as obvious and immediate as a slap in the face. The twin drinking-fountains found in some areas, the double waiting rooms, the signs in buses directing Negroes to seats in the rear—all the paraphernalia of the Jim Crow system are everywhere before the eye.

But the double standard is so well established in the South that many residents treat it as something that is part of the ordered mode of existence, a matter beyond question or dispute. The elaborate structure of segregation has been present for so long that white residents seem to be conscious of it only when it is threatened.

Under such circumstances, the fight against Jim Crow rule in the South has not moved at the pace one would desire. The walls between whites and Negroes are high, and they do not go down easily. But they are not as strong as they once were, and now a decision of the Supreme Court has further weakened them.

The case in question was a simple one, involving a Negro high school principal who boarded a train in the North. Asked to move to an all-Negro car when the train entered the South, the educator refused. He was then ejected from the train and immediately arrested by the local police for disorderly conduct. Subsequently he sued for damages.

In deciding in favor of the ousted principal, the U.S. Court of Appeals at Richmond held that segregating passengers in this fashion amounted to an unconstitutional burden upon interstate commerce. This verdict was promptly appealed to the Supreme Court, which has now sustained the lower court.

What the full effect of the decision will be is not yet known. Clearly, railroads will no longer be able to force Negroes who board trains in the North to transfer to Jim Crow cars when the train enters the South. Lawyers for Southern railroads, however, claim that this decision will not apply to travel which begins and ends in the South, and further litigation will probably be necessary to clarify this point. But despite this fact it is certain that a major victory against segregation has been won.

NEXT WEEK

JOHN MCKEON writes about Sidney Franklin and the world of bull-fighting.

"The fighting of bulls is essentially a morality play, the players artists in that they bring great gifts to its enactment: iron discipline within 'the danger of the horns,' great grace of movement, courage of an exalted order, an exquisite sense of timing, intelligence that enables them to subdue brute strength and, finally, a profound sense of identification and true sympathy with the antagonist. This makes them speak of a fighting bull as 'brave,' the symbol of natural man, possessed of unlimited courage but without hope, who must die that his supernatural destiny be attained. The end of all this, as with any art, is to convey beauty and truth to the spectator."

PROMISE AND PERFORMANCE

DURING a political campaign, running against taxes is good partisan exercise, and even though he entered politics as a novice, General Eisenhower got right into the game. In no time at all he was talking about cutting taxes, and eventually he hit on the goal of a twenty billion dollar cut in the budget within four years.

The budget for the 1954 fiscal year, which is now being prepared for Congress, calls for spending in excess of eighty billion dollars. Offhand, this sum seems sufficiently large to make cutting the budget relatively simple. But fully three-quarters of this sum is slated for the armed forces, for aid to our allies abroad, and for atomic energy development. Economy-minded legislators can probably prune this total, but wholesale cuts can hardly be made without endangering the whole security program.

Yet if there are to be heavy slashes in the budget, this is the area where most of them will have to be made. The remaining one-quarter of the total covers expenditures like interest on the national debt and other similar payments, many of which represent fixed charges. Some savings may be possible on certain items, but no really substantial cuts are feasible.

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For the Democrats, the way of partisan politics in such circumstances would seem to consist in seizing every opportunity to needle General Eisenhower about the tax cuts he promised. But in our opinion this would be unwise.

If General Eisenhower and his advisers see any part of the budget which can be safely trimmed, well and good. But for the sake of national security, there should be no attempt to keep the Republicans impaled on a rash campaign promise. Nobody likes the present high taxes. But with the Soviet's aggressive intentions crystal-clear, low taxes now could mean national suicide on a pay-as-you-go basis.

THE BISHOPS' STATEMENT

IN THE statement with which they concluded their 1952 meeting, the Catholic Bishops of the United States have warned against the forces of dogmatic secularism — forces which have grown steadily stronger and bolder during the past few decades until they now constitute a major threat to the spiritual, moral, and cultural traditions of American society.

These forces have made the "doctrine" of Church-State separation their shibboleth. In its name they have waged an increasingly hostile warfare against religious influences on the national life, and in their battle the major effort has been directed against the influence of the Catholic Church, especially in the field of education. And so they have been particularly concerned lest Catholic school children receive such "auxiliary" state aid as free textbooks or transportation. Such aid, they have insisted, would constitute a dangerous violation of "Separation."

Recently, some spokesmen for the secularist position have gone even further. Men like Mr. Paul Blanshard and Dr. James Conant have publicly deplored the very existence of the private religious school as something in itself "un-American," an institution which, because it is "divisive," should find no place in our national life.

This demand for the ultimate elimination of the private religious school was probably to be expected as the logical completion of that "wall" which the secularists have tried to build. For their wall, it is clear, is not intended merely to separate such logically distinguished powers as the civil and religious. It has as its aim, rather, the final and complete sealing-off of the things of Caesar from the things of God. It is a wall which would have no door, no window, and no surmountable top. And there is no doubt that, in the dogmatic secularist's Brave New World, all "good Americans" would be forever imprisoned on one side of it.

The Bishops have pointed out that the idea of such a wall would have horrified the Founding Fathers, who wrote the First Amendment to the Constitution as a wise guarantee of religious freedom and the separation of civil and religious power rather than as a positive deterrent to friendly relations between Church and State. It is to this original, rational concept which they now recall us, and it is this concept which was stated in a recent Supreme Court Decision: "When the state encourages religious instruction or cooperates with religious authorities . . . it follows the best of our traditions."

What the forces of dogmatic secularism are really attacking is the basically pluralistic foundations of our culture and, consequently, the foundations of freedom itself. Whatever their motives, they would impose on the nation the tyranny of a democratic absolutism. They would hasten us toward 1984. To combat their influence is a task in which all who understand the nature of freedom can join with religious men, for in the secularist assaults upon religion and its influence in America, all that is worth saving in our society is endangered.

THE DEFEATED PRESIDENT

IT SEEMS to be almost universally agreed that the clearest casualty of the election was the President himself. For, although Harry S. Truman was not a candidate this year, it was against his record that the Republicans waged their campaign, and it was at him, rather than at the generally invulnerable Governor of Illinois, that they directed their most bitter attacks.

And so, although Adlai Stevenson has been treated with courtesy and even with generosity in newspapers which opposed him, the President has been granted little post-election immunity from attack. His enemies are proving themselves in victory as unforgiving as they were during their long years of defeat. "Truman" and "Trumanism" are still the opprobrious terms they have always been in their vocabulary.

The President might now have expected more chivalry from his critics, but we doubt it. His treatment at their hands during most of his years in office would make such optimism possible only to a remarkably unrealistic man, and Harry Truman is, above all else, a veteran realist. We suspect that the President anticipated most of the harsh things which are still being said about his motives and patriotism, and that he might even take a certain satisfaction in them. Being a realist, Harry Truman knows that there are people whose eternal enmity no honorable man can afford to avoid.

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EGGHEADS, SOFT-BOILED

EGGHEADS—the new name for American "intellectuals"—is not a very precise classification. There are many detached scholars and thinkers in American life who would not be deemed eggheads by the popular publications which coined the word. The way the term is used, an egghead is not necessarily a scholar but a political- and social-minded person with some claim to membership in that vague, amorphous grouping called the intelligentsia.

Eggheads write novels and plays (but not all novelists and playwrights are eggheads); they do book reviews for the butcher-paper weeklies and the literary supplements of the great newspapers; they join committees and sign open letters in the pages of the New York *Times*. These, of course, are the well-known eggheads. Many others are generally anonymous, known only to the people in their own small worlds.

Eggheads have been mercilessly caricatured—both in the dedicated anti-egghead press and in satires written by other eggheads, like Mary McCarthy's. And it is true, they are often not very thoughtful people though they profess great respect for the pursuit of truth. No one can candle an egghead like another egghead, and this has been done with deadly effectiveness in the loyal egghead press.

Eggheads make much of tolerance but, like their critics, are not notably sympathetic to points of view that clash with their own. Their superciliousness, that characteristic vice of the consciously "intellectual," antagonizes. The egghead circle, inevitably, attracts the poseur, the malcontent, the dangerously little-learned and the intellectual faddist—and these hangers-on have always been fair game for anti-egghead scorn.

But the most damning argument against the eggheads these days is that from this group came the Soviet-sympathizers, the anti-anti-Communists, the "agrarian-reformer" apologists, etc., who furthered American illusions about Soviet Russia until a few years ago. Sometimes the charge is exaggerated; it is made to sound as if all eggheads are secret fellow-travelers, or, at best, muddle-headed incompetents who would gaily lead us all down the road to destruction.

Actually, I think that it would be hard to find any sizable number of Soviet sympathizers in the egghead group today, and certainly in the group are many of the most valiant and most knowledgeable anti-Communists in America. Still there is some basis for the present scorn heaped on the egghead class.

Nazism was the eggheads' favorite evil; it dramatized so clearly all the things they hated. Nazism was viciously racist, militaristic, jingoistic, dictatorial, anti-intellectual, anti-democratic, anti-humanist. Almost from its beginnings Hitlerism was seen as the epitome of evil.

But Hitler was not only anti-democratic, he was vigorously anti-Communist, too. And the Communists were vigorously anti-Hitler. That complicated the question, and to this day the alliances that were formed in the 1930's still bedevil relations between large groups of our own citizens. Marxism, of course, incorporates in its teachings many of the evils found in Hitlerism. But the Communists—except during the brief post-pact honeymoon—fought valiantly against fascism. It seemed to many illusion-ridden eggheads that the Communists hated in Hitlerism the same things that aroused their own anti-fascist dedication. The Communists played on this naive belief shrewdly and thereby won the sympathy of many egghead anti-fascists.

There were always egghead anti-Communists, but for a long time the very vocal anti-Communist, consciously anti-Communist, element in American life was not notable for its respect for the intellect, its passion for civil liberties or its hatred of racism. Rather it was characterized by a semi-fascist mentality of its own. When it was vociferously attacking Communism, it often sounded as if it were attacking intellectualism, belief in civil liberties, concern for the social order and other good causes which the Communists so spectacularly supported.

For many years it was this kind of "anti-Communism," more than Communism itself, which seemed to many eggheads to represent the more imminent danger in American life. And the "anti-Communists" compounded the confusion by throwing all "intellectuals," "liberals," and "progressives" into the same Marxist grab-bag.

While they were being wildly denounced by the "anti-Communists," the eggheads were cajoled and confused by the Communists themselves. Many fell into the trap set for them. In their hatred for fascism they developed a moral blindness to the evils of Communism. The particular type of education which has long occupied a respectable place in American life—the amalgam of relativism, positivism, scientism and secularism—prepared minds for the kind of cafeteria thinking which could rationalize the evils of the Soviet system while it excoriated the same kind of evils in Nazism. It wasn't until the great postwar awakening, after the Soviet conquests, that the "anti-fascist" mentality began to examine the real nature of Communism.

During the years of Hitler's rise, the "anti-Communists" steadfastly refused to face up to the real evil of Nazism; they were almost blinded by "anti-Communism." Too many among the eggheads, during the same years, were blinded by "anti-fascism," where Communism was concerned.

JOHN COGLEY.

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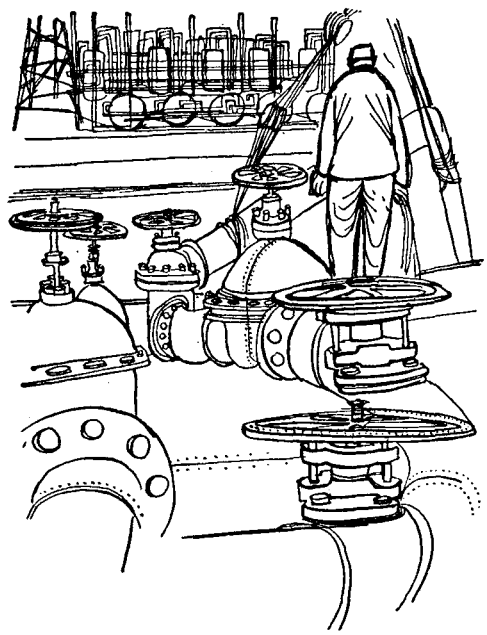
The Age of Confusion

HUMAN SOCIETY IS COMING TO RESEMBLE THE SMOOTHLY-FUNCTIONING MECHANISM OF THE ANT-HEAP OR BEE-HIVE

BARBARA WARD

I HAVE just completed a journey round the world. Ideally, I suppose, that should store up inside anyone who made such a journey a sense of great variety and of great change in environment and great changes in experience, in the way people live, in the way countries look, and, in fact, even in the way one travels. But I think that looking over it, and going back over the past year, the thing that strikes me above all is not so much the variety but the rather frightening sense one has of uniformity.



Let me put it this way: nearly everything I experienced in the course of this journey, which was specifically twentieth century, tended to be very much the same. One had the same kind of travel; if you travel by aircraft, out through the Middle East or through Australia, or, again, across America, it is the same kind of aircraft and you land at airports which have an astonishing family resemblance. And when you are in the air you seem to be given, to a remarkable extent, the same bitty kinds of meals in whatever aircraft you are traveling.

Perhaps that is a trivial example. But I take it further, and I would say that if you go and see a new workers' suburb, whether it is in Cairo, or on the outskirts of Bombay, or out in Australia, or again in America, the type of architecture, the type of housing, the big blocks of flats, all tend to be the same; and in whichever country you are, there is a remarkable resemblance between steel plants. And again and again one has the sense that the twentieth century's contribution to this world is constantly the same, is constantly reinforcing a kind of mass background, a mass environment, and if you want variety you must look back to the things that have been created in the past. That is where the differences in architecture and costume and culture seem to come from.

Perhaps I had always known this, but it made me think that one perhaps underestimates the extent to which, in the twentieth century, this mass background of standardization has crept into all our lives, how the whole of the conditioning of our life tends to be turning on mass industry, mass communication, mass education if you like, the mass reproduction of the same kind of literature, the same kind of magazines and newspapers. And wherever you go in the world, even if you go as far away from England as you can go and come back again, all the way you are going to find these same influences.

It is also disturbing in thinking of this environment of the mass structure, if you remember that it occurred at a time when other influences, apart from the environment, were diminishing—one's attitude towards man, one's outlook on him and his place in society. It is not only that we have this hugeness pressing in on us, whether it is the big estate or the big factory or quick travel, or literacy in the mass sense. It is the fact that it came at a time when already our view of man was beginning to be far less certain than it used to be.

If you take the sweep of our own western civilization, during its early development in the medieval period, it is clear that man was regarded as the reflection of God and as having God-given rights, which were often disregarded but nevertheless made the focus of people's attitude towards man. Then, in the post-Renaissance period, for two or three centuries at least, even if the view of man with his God-given rights began to fade a little, nevertheless there was a tremendous assumption that man was the crown of creation, and the special arbiter of terrestrial destiny. But in the nineteenth and

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twentieth centuries this view of man has been very much undermined, by our discoveries both of what man came from—the vast evolutionary process which brought us up from almost nothing in the material world to this organization of senses and nerves and brain that we have now—and also of the infinitesimal scale of the earth in the whole of the cosmos in relation to the almost unlimited aspect of space which has since been discovered. One again had the impression of man reduced to a minute flicker of star-dust on the face of the earth.

Therefore man was being always automatically diminished in our thinking, just at a time when the environment that surrounded him was becoming more of a mass environment, and one that diminished him in his physical surroundings just as he was diminishing himself in his own rational and spiritual outlook. At the same time there was one other factor at work, particularly in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and that was the idea that man was a creature, above all, of his own nation, and then by a very easy transformation of ideas, of the state. The extent to which the nation-state became part of everyone's thought, and the extent to which everybody took for granted that the nation-state was the most significant thing, both in national and international organization, was a new feature of our modern world.

But man, in facing the state and the nation, is reduced once more; his individuality tends to be submerged in national interest and in national force. And he has had, in this century, twice to submit to the extreme anonymity of fighting in totalitarian mass war.

All these forces, therefore, have tended little by little to diminish the individuality and personality of human beings, and in their place to build up the idea of the collective unit, the collective society, in which the collectivity has much greater influence than the individual, and in which the sinking of the individual in the interests of the collective unit has been taken more and more for granted. It should, I suppose, therefore be no surprise to us that the typical forms of government which have arisen in this century have been on the whole what we now call totalitarian. In other words, there have been forms of government ideally suited for the manipulation and the control of the mass; whereas before, our concept of society did tend to stem, however confusedly, from individual rights and individual responsibilities, or at any rate from individuals in small social groups.

In the twentieth century there emerged types of organizations suited to this mass environment, and whether you take them from the extreme right, via Nazism, or from the extreme left, via Communism, the instrument of control, the mass, the single party, the whole organization of the state and the total control of all its economic and political and spiritual resources, fits, in an uncanny way, into the kind of environment which industry and science and modern technology have helped to create. In other words, in this century the new types of government have reflected the new types of environment.

Sometimes one has an almost nightmare picture of a society which has become so articulated, and so organized, and so, in a way, indifferent to the humors and complexities and quirks of individual men and women, that it might even come to resemble those highly smoothly-functioning societies, the ant-heap or the beehive. I was reading recently a few remarks by an American literary critic, Edmund Wilson: he asked, was it a coincidence that the things which we are perfecting above everything else—our aircraft—tend to look more and more like insects and tend also to have more and more perfected stings? In other words, even in our industrial life we unconsciously begin to reflect almost an insect-like society.

THERE is another frightening thought: that in the Communist prophecy that the state will finally wither away one may have a dream of society even more disturbing than that of total state control; because if you postulate that a state is necessary for total control it means that individuals are so uppish and so unreliable and so likely to misbehave themselves that you still need an organization to control them. But if you say that the state can wither away, may you not in fact be assuming that human beings can become so wedded to their functions, so absolutely content with the fulfilment of a specific task in society, that their degree of revolt or their degree of maladjustment is no greater than that of the ant?

It is a confusing situation, because it is one for which we were not prepared. In the nineteenth century all our thinking was on the whole fairly optimistic about the future of man in society, progress was thought to be inevitable, science was opening up the horizons of production and of creation, and man by education and by literacy was to learn to govern himself and to create the good society. That spate of optimism, which was new in the history of man, has been followed by disasters on the scale of our two world wars, of the concentration camp, of the appalling horrors that man has committed against man in the last decade. So from extreme optimism we were suddenly confronted with extreme disaster: and that naturally creates great confusion.

Another factor is that so many of the nostrums and cures put forward to help us in this situation tend to make it worse. For example, most people believe that a measure of planning is necessary if we are to get a decent economic environment. But may we not, by way of planning, further reduce the individual initiative and

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creativeness of individual human beings? The biggest paradox of this kind is Communism itself, which, with aims of brotherhood, of love, of the creation of a new heaven and a new earth, ends in reproducing an Asiatic despotism of the most alarming power and brutality.

So we were not prepared for the situations that confronted us, and that, I think, is enough to explain our confusion of mind. Nevertheless, it seems to me that out of this confusion, which has been created by the contrast between our extreme optimism and some of the terrors that have been visited upon us—which has also been created by our desperate awareness of mass society encroaching upon the individual—some new ideas and some new thoughts are beginning to feel their way and to make their impact. So far, perhaps, it is a very small minority which feels these things. New ideas usually come from small groups. But they do point the way to where a new radicalism could in fact develop and lead us in the second part of this century.

One of the elements that I notice is a growing distrust of the idea of the nation-state as the be-all and end-all, as it were, of political and social activity. I do not mean by that that we have recovered from extreme nationalism; it is still very strong. But in a number of ways we are beginning to see that certain problems can only find an international solution and that, if we try to keep ourselves within our own national frontiers, we are not going to find a solution at all.

Perhaps the warmth of feeling for the United Nations, and also the feeling that plans such as the Marshall Plan (which transcended national frontiers) or the movement towards European Union are in keeping with our times, is a reflection of this growing awareness that you cannot solve everything within the frontiers of your own state. I do not think that we always realize how new that feeling is or how much our nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century reformers took it for granted that the state could be the normal unit for both a good life and for every form of human advance.

The next point that seems to me to be coming up in our contemporary thinking is a revulsion against the idea of automatic progress, and the belief that the creation of a good society is something far more complicated and challenging and testing than merely leaving it to the forces of history. In fact, I would say that only two groups now have this old belief in progress. The Communists, on the one hand, in their apocalyptic way believe that provided everything gets as bad as possible on the other side of it there will be the brotherhood of man. They still maintain, I think, that history leads inevitably to the creation of the class society. I suppose there are also still people who cling to a *laissez-faire* philosophy which seems to be that, provided you leave everyone to pursue his own interests, the outcome of all these separate interests will be the common good. That latter viewpoint is dying a little, but one notices strong pockets of this feeling still in the United States.

But, in general, people are far more aware that the good society is something which is created by effort, by hard work, by devotion and by faith; and that, whereas the normal state of mankind is to slip back into exploitation, into tyranny, into the grosser forms of political and social manipulation and control, you can, by hard work, hard effort, by great faith and by great generosity, create the good society. And I think people realize that the creation of freedom in the western world has been, if you take the long perspective of history, almost a flash in the pan, almost, if you take the millennia, a very small experiment; but, nevertheless, the growing point of everything else, and something that has to be cherished and built upon, and which will not fall, from heaven as it were, for the next harvest.

This leads me to my third point. I am convinced that in much of our new radical thinking we are coming back to the concept of the human personality as the beginning and end of our social and political striving. By that human personality we now recognize the very large element of faith and idealism which is necessary even to have a concept of human personality. Take man into the laboratory, dissect him, and all his greatness will vanish. Reduce him to material things and he is no more, really, than his little bag of dust. But if you see him still as the crown of creation, the reflection of divine life in the world, then you can have faith in his freedom and you can have infinite respect both for his personality and for his need for freedom. You will no longer treat him as a means, you will treat him as an end.

Admittedly, this is a matter of faith. But here, I think, is where the humanist and those of Christian faith, and those who are genuinely concerned with the survival and maintenance of human freedom, can find common ground. They can realize that what we predicate about western man is fundamentally a matter of how we believe in him, that in our education, in the organization of our society, we have to give this faith its expression, to recognize that there are certain rights belonging to the human being which transcend all the conveniences of government or of industry or of science. They are the beginning of the matter and not the end. We have also to realize that infinite variety is part of the human pattern, and we have to realize it all the more clearly because so much of our environment inevitably aims towards the collective mass. It is in this meeting grounds, in faith in the human personality, and faith in the supernatural and divine destiny of man, that radicals and humanists and Christians meet in the modern world.

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FROM SWEDEN

They Call It Humanitarianism

MEDICAL reports have recently been published in Sweden which are even more startling than Professor Kinsey's findings, because they are based on a type of scientifically controlled material which cannot be found anywhere else in the world. This material is the roughly thirty-five thousand cases of "legal interruption of pregnancy" as defined by the law of 1946. This law legalizes abortion, not only in cases when pregnancy presumably endangers the mother's life, but also on "eugenic, humanitarian and social grounds." The last named grounds have accounted for most cases since the law was passed.

This means that the majority of cases concerns perfectly healthy subjects and not subjects suffering from a disease of some kind. And this situation is, of course, in contrast with most other countries in the world, where abortions on healthy subjects are beyond any sort of serious control, since they are illegal and usually performed in a primitive and unhygienic way. The thirty-five thousand Swedish cases have not only been carefully prepared as far as the background of each case is concerned, but they have been performed by well-known surgeons. Their physical and moral consequences have been followed up with statistics and interviews. They thus remind one of the experiments made by German doctors during the war on human guinea pigs in concentration camps. In both cases the ethical side has been completely ignored and in both cases this violation has had serious consequences which are of utmost interest.

First of all, it has to be made very clear that the Lutheran Church in Scandinavia does not oppose abortion "justified" on medical grounds and is fighting a losing battle against the other more elastic grounds put forward by the law of 1946. In a letter published by the Lutheran bishops of Sweden on this and similar subjects last year "Christian charity" is said to favor abortion on medical grounds or if the mother has been made pregnant against her own will and "thinks that the child ought never to be born." The abortion law of 1946, the most elastic of its kind in the world, could never have come into existence if it had not had a large backing by public opinion. Sweden, followed by Denmark and Finland, therefore follows the most "advanced" position in this question, while practically all other countries in the world, including the Peoples Democracies on the other side of the Iron Curtain, allow abortions only on serious medical grounds. In fact, in most of these countries the tendency is toward making abortions more difficult to obtain.

THE admitted aim of the Swedish law was to reduce the number of illegal abortions, which very often, due to their lack of scientific method, ended in severe illness or even death for the expectant mother. What are the results now, after six years? According to statistics, the number of illegal abortions is roughly the same as before. The situation is the same as that which followed introduction of divorce, which was intended to abolish all unhappy marriages, but which in reality has increased the number of unhappy marriages in countries where divorce is easy to obtain. Many women still prefer illegal abortions in order to avoid the red tape connected with the legal ones.

As a consequence of the availability of legal abortions, prices have fallen sharply in the illegal racket, and methods have become more scientific out of sheer competition. Thus the law of 1946 has completely failed in its primary aim. This failure is publicly admitted by an increasing number of worried physicians, many of whom had given the law their original backing.

Every third or every fourth legal abortion in Sweden is combined with sterilization in order to avoid further pregnancies and new abortions. In some cases, when the medical authorities concerned with the case find low intelligence quotients or hereditary insanity or disease in the father or the mother of the doomed foetus, the condition imposed for the abortion is sterilization of the mother. In other cases the mother asks for it herself and it is easily granted. But since statistics have shown that the mortality rate is four times higher if the mother is sterilized at the same time as abortion is performed, many doctors are in favor of a natural birth of the child and sterilization some time afterwards, usually as soon as the mother has recovered sufficiently to undergo it.

The most common ground for which abortion is granted (as common and vague as "the mental cruelty" for which divorce is granted in the United States) is the "weakness" or "foreseen weakness" of the mother. This "weakness" can mean almost anything, particularly if it is "foreseen," and as the number of legal abortions increase, the more elastic becomes the "weakness" basis. It might mean merely increased difficulty in taking her examination for an unmarried student, or the difficulty in taking a holiday abroad for a married woman.

One amazing aspect of this mentality was shown by a woman doctor, in an article in a Swedish medical review, who denounced the tendency among some expectant mothers seeking legal abortion actually to prefer

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bearing their child, if only they could find someone to adopt it. This tendency, said the doctor, demonstrated a lack of responsibility towards the child, when the possibilities for abortion are there.

Another shocking aspect of this problem was indicated in a recent violent discussion in the Swedish press. One of the country's best-known and most highly appreciated surgeons, Professor Per Wetterdal of the Sabbatsberg clinic in Stockholm, was worried by the ever-increasing number of legal abortions which were performed in his clinic as soon as the bureaucratic formalities were settled through the specially created "Offices for Sexual Advice."

One of the aims of these offices is to prevent abortions by teaching the women applying for abortion an up-to-date contraceptive technique. In spite of this, the majority of the non-sterilized women who had once been granted abortion became pregnant again very soon, and one out of four was granted abortion again. The contraceptive advice did not work because both men and women proved reluctant to follow it, for unknown psychological reasons (very few Swedes think of frowning upon contraceptive practices). Again, according to statistics, one out of five women who have been granted abortion is reported to be suffering from "neurosis," regretting what she has done, in spite of the fact that it was sanctioned by the law. This moral crisis is reported to be most frequent among the more educated and cultured classes.

THIS was the background which led Professor Wetterdal to have an informal talk with the expectant mothers sent to him by the "Office for Sexual Advice." He soon realized that the majority were married women with children, and he started asking them general questions about why they wanted abortion. In most cases the reason was economic difficulties: too small flats, or too much work to be able to manage another child. Very calmly, very gravely and directly, the professor then fired his question: "Why don't you shoot one of the kids you already have? After all, it is the same . . ."

The reaction to the question was surprising. The poor women broke down completely or started to cry hysterically. Undoubtedly this was a sore point he had touched rather brutally, and it proved to be a sore point practically without exception. He noted that a patient expecting to be operated on for appendicitis or even for cancer does not behave that way, even if he is handled roughly. It was an unknown element which came into the picture here, an unknown element which he had never come across with his surgical instruments, but which was very real and which he respected.

His informal talks with his patients resulted in some cases in the women's returning to the office for sexual advice, having changed their minds or still crying, with his words ringing in their ears.

One of the women in the Central Office started violent attacks against the professor, accusing him of being an inhuman brute, backward and cruel enough to frighten poor women already sufficiently upset by what they had decided to do. So strong was her impact that she won over a large segment of public opinion as it appeared in the press and in letters to the editors.

PROFESSOR Wetterdal was denounced as a brute, even after he defended himself, and his supporters were half-hearted until an illustrated weekly, with a fine sense for public opinion, turned the tide with a brutally realistic inquiry into legal abortion in Sweden. Why are these women so upset that they can't hear the voice of their own conscience, it asked. It is impossible to draw a line between infanticide and abortion, it said further. If a mother risks her life for her born child, everybody approves of it and she is considered a heroine. If she risks her life for her unborn child she is criticized as "irresponsible." If out of "weakness" she abandons her child prematurely born and it dies, she is condemned for infanticide. If she obtains legal abortion for "weakness," everything is all right. Where is the difference and what is the difference?

Then details were revealed of how the legal abortions are performed in the "well-run" and perfectly hygienic Swedish clinics, and these details filled the readers with horror. According to the law, abortion may be performed up to the end of the fifth month, or in special cases up to the end of the sixth month. In fact, more than seventy-five per cent of all the abortions are performed between the fourth and the seventh month through ordinary caesarian operation. The foetus is then a perfectly formed human being, able to live, according to the experts on abortion, with its heart beating from four to five hours outside the body of the mother, if it is not hurt during the operation. It lives—and what is to be done with it? Nothing, the doctors tell us; it just slowly ceases to live.

The readers were stunned and disgusted. If somebody in Sweden, with its high humanitarian standards, treats a hen or a rabbit that way, the League for Protection of Animals will intervene with the utmost energy and the offender will be severely condemned. But a human being has less rights than a rabbit, because it is not yet "born."

Nobody dares to criticize Professor Wetterdal any more when he asks his feared question: "Why don't you shoot one of the kids you already have? After all it is the same . . ." And practically no more abortions are performed in his clinic.

GUNNAR D. KUMLIEN.

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The Passing of an Era

ON the day after the election, the *Daily Herald*, organ of the British Labor Party, said in reference to the Republican victory: "All liberal and progressive Americans, and all organized labor in particular, will accept it with dismay and foreboding."

I don't know how my "liberal and progressive" franchise stands as of this moment, but my union card is paid up and so I can say that here is one member of organized labor who is not bent over with dismay and foreboding. A little nervousness perhaps, but no real gloom. And I would have voted for Adlai Stevenson a hundred times if I could. In my opinion he is the most attractive, best qualified candidate that has been offered the American people since Abraham Lincoln.

At the same time I cannot go along with William Green, president of the AFL, who wired General Eisenhower: "We have full and complete confidence that as the next President of the United States you will do your utmost to carry out your pledge to be fair and just to Americans in all walks of life."

Unfortunately, Eisenhower's short record as a politician does not inspire full and complete confidence. His campaign inspires, rather, the feeling that you cannot be sure what the man is going to do next. We can hope that he will listen to the more liberal elements who won him the nomination, but we must also consider the possibility that for one reason or another he may bend a friendly ear to the counsels of the Tafts, Jenners and McCarthys.

To Brother Green's confidence I prefer Philip Murray's more wary statement to a meeting of the Steelworkers: "We will lend wholesome support to any administration that has in mind constructive measures for the common people, but we will resist any effort by special groups to deprive the people of their constitutional rights."

Some of the efforts that labor feels may be made by the more reactionary victors include attempts to knock out industry-wide bargaining, the union shop and the check-off, and a return of the anti-strike injunction to an even more prominent place in our industrial life than it enjoys under Taft-Hartley.

But I must admit that, though I am not confident, I am hopeful that reaction has not won so sweeping a victory that it can get such pernicious measures past both Congress and Eisenhower. Perhaps our primary duty at this time is to pray that God spares the General for the full term, because with Nixon at the helm we are at the mercy of the whirlwind.

With these reservations then, you can dig up some sour-grape angles to this thing that are quite consoling.

TO begin with, change is exhilarating. Even Stevenson, with all his fresh and refreshing approaches, would have meant a continuation of twenty years of Democratic occupation in the White House.

What is most exhilarating about this change is that it has put an end to the Republicans' enjoyment of the luxury of irresponsible opposition and obstruction. Now they have to put up or shut up. In a sense they must both put up *and* shut up. No more field days with Communists in the State Department. No more open season on blaming the Democrats for creeping Socialism, corruption, Korea, strikes, high taxes, high prices or low rainfall. What happens now is strictly their responsibility.

Another healthy thing about the Eisenhower victory is that it brings a certain logic to our political situation for the first time since the thirties.

Since that time we have been living under a government with a split personality. The administration has been liberal, the Congress conservative, and worse. Thanks to a coalition of Northern Republicans and Southern Democrats, hundreds of reactionary measures have been passed and virtually all progressive legislation has been stymied. Roosevelt and Truman vetoed a good many bills, but many of these were passed over the Presidential vetoes and some, for various reasons could not be vetoed at all. The result was that Roosevelt and Truman had to take the responsibility for laws which they actually opposed. There is now a merciful end to this situation.

As others have pointed out, the change in Congress has been relatively slight. Labor's League for Political Education, the AFL's political arm, estimates that the old Senate contained forty members who were friendly to labor, fifty-five unfriendly and one uncertain; while the old House had one hundred and eighty-one friendly Representatives, two hundred and twenty-two unfriendly and thirty-two uncertain. The new Congress they estimate as follows: Senate thirty-eight friendly, fifty-six unfriendly and two uncertain; House one hundred and sixty-one friendly, two hundred and thirty-eight unfriendly and thirty-six uncertain.

The definition of "friendly" and "unfriendly" is based on the known attitude of members toward repeal or retention of the Taft-Hartley Act. On a less strict test the friendly faces would increase, but no test could be made unstrict enough to put labor's friends in the majority in the present, the last, or any

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Congress since those of the thirties. In short, Congress has become a little more unfriendly than it was and the Administration just about matches it. To those who like logic, this makes sense.

There remains one difficult thing to justify about this election, and that is the retirement to private life of a great man, Adlai Stevenson. I understand that in the first few days after his defeat he received twenty-five thousand letters and ten thousand telegrams, many of them from people who voted for Eisenhower. This sounds more like the mail of the victor than the vanquished.

I think it possible that under the circumstances of American political life in the year 1952, Stevenson's influence for good may be greater in defeat than it could have been in victory. And of course there is always 1956, and even 1954. Let us hope that we have not lost this splendid man forever.

THE DEATH OF PHILIP MURRAY

SHORTLY after I had started the above comments my wife came in with the daily paper and the news that Philip Murray was dead. What the Republican victory could not do to me, this news did.

So far, Allan Haywood, executive vice-president of the CIO, James Carey, secretary-treasurer of the CIO, and Walter Reuther, president of the United Auto Workers, have been mentioned as possible successors to Murray. All are good men, but none has the stand-out quality of Murray. He will be greatly missed.

I did not know Murray, and face to face I think I heard him speak on only two occasions. What I took away from those occasions, and what I have seen and heard of his life from others who knew him better add up to one of the most powerful and appealing Christian personalities of our time. And secondarily, one of the great labor leaders of our time.

As a labor leader he was certainly a success. Next to John L. Lewis and John Mitchell he probably had as much to do with the organization of the coal industry as anyone. Next to no one else he bears responsibility for the job of organizing and consolidating the great steel industry into a union of over one million members.

There have been other successful labor leaders. That was not Murray's strength. His peculiar strength and distinction lay in his remarkable spiritual quality. This quality shone through whenever he spoke. It was marked, above all, by humility, charity, honesty and courage. Perhaps the most striking of these was his humility. This is a rare virtue, and particularly rare among men prominent in public life.

Again and again you hear politicians say, "With great humility I, etc." Perhaps they do feel humble from time to time when they consider the responsibilities of some new job and compare it with their own meager abilities. But if so, it is a virtue they soon forget once in office. Murray gave the impression that he never forgot it. And yet he could be wonderfully sharp with those who fed on injustice and exploitation. There was an Old Testament quality to his indignation.

He was a man of love, a man who loved God and was never afraid, as so many of us are today, to bring God into his talk and conversation, as one might introduce a good friend to other friends. And his love of man matched his love of God. This is another of the things that stands out—how so many men and women who knew him felt a warm personal feeling toward him. This kind of feeling goes only to men who love in return.

Murray was a Catholic, and one we can be proud of, one who had many of the qualities of Christian sanctity. The grain of wheat has fallen into the ground and died. It has already borne fruit in remarkable statements of grief and affection from leaders of the steel industry who opposed Murray with bitter violence in the past—statements such as that of Admiral Morreel, chairman of Jones & Laughlin, who said, among other things: "What better monument could be erected to Phil's memory than for all of us, working together with goodwill and faith in each other's integrity, to establish that complete cooperation of management and labor which he spent his life to achieve?"

For all of us in the labor movement there is a message in the words of Charles Smith, a minor Steelworkers' official, who after Murray's death told the union's district convention which Murray had addressed the night before: "We must redouble our efforts to make the union a monument to his memory."

But the statement I like best was that of a Pennsylvania judge, Justice Michael Musmanno, who said: "To Phil Murray we do not say good-bye because we will see him every day in the charity, mercy and brotherly understanding which he spread during his lifetime."

God rest his noble soul.

JOHN C. CORT.

THE STAGE

THE DEEP BLUE SEA

MR. Francis Ferguson has likened contemporary playwrights to hunters with camera and flash bulbs in the depths of the Belgian Congo, seeking out, at rare intervals, that "hopelessly elusive and uncandid entity," human nature. In his latest play, Mr. Terence Rattigan has portrayed one of these desperate quarries. His subject is a middle-aged woman in the grip

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of a neurotic passion; his theme is obsession and its corroding effect on the human spirit.

Hester Collyer is the wife of a barrister who, some time previously, has left her husband out of a compulsion too great to resist—a compulsion which drives her into a seedy backstairs existence with a charming but shiftless ex-R.A.F. pilot. When the play opens, she has attempted, and failed, to commit suicide in their shabby London flat. It is this abrupt and shocking gesture which brings together the strands of Hester's life in a web explored by Mr. Rattigan with considerable brilliance and authority. He shows us her husband, devoted but rather austere, whom Hester has inexplicably and quite terribly ceased to love. He then gives us a splendidly etched portrait of her lover, the young pilot whose life really stopped with the Battle of Britain — a decent enough chap, but driven by the intensity of Hester's obsession to living at an emotional pitch he can hardly sustain. Finally, there is an unlicensed refugee doctor, a dry, spare character who alone can help Hester, by showing her the possibilities not of happiness but of control.

Mr. Rattigan is the most personal of playwrights; no one writing for the stage today, of his quality and preoccupation, brings such theatrical guile or so much concentration to the intense, airless and often terrifying world of "personal relations." "The Deep Blue Sea" is his most accomplished work, and a prose drama superior to any the English have sent us since the war. It is, quite emphatically, not without fault. Like most of his contemporaries, Mr. Rattigan is a victim of the inadequacy of realism—an inadequacy which is not so much one of imagination, as it is of language. He is dealing with a situation of the heaviest emotional weight; the atmosphere of his play should be saturated with passion and heat, yet he has rarely been able to project us imaginatively beyond the sordid meanness of Hester's dreary London flat. Then, too, his notable gifts as a *farceur* constantly impede his impulse toward the genuine and serious: he cannot resist the sharp, satiric vignette whether or not it splinters the mood.

But it is Mr. Rattigan's terrible honesty which makes so striking an impact. In his studies of the three men whose lives impinge on Hester's, he conveys not merely the illusion of contemporaneity, but something of the very shape and pressure of our time. Hester herself is a little vague, a little shadowed. It might even be said that she is essentially a clinical figure, suitable for psychiatric observation rather than dramatic contemplation, My own feeling is that Mr. Rattigan has focused on that most delicate, constantly shifting nexus where pathology is indistinguishable from some more profound and devastating affliction of the spirit. Hester echoes, however vaguely, that characteristic modern note—the morbid voracity for experience.

But all one's reservations go down before the immense drive and conviction of Miss Margaret Sullavan's performance. Her return to the stage after almost a decade represents a triumph both of personality and dramatic intuition. She is playing a part for which she is not obviously equipped; that is, she can suggest Hester's breeding but not her license, and she would seem, moreover, too young and charming to give the situation its special, necessary poignance. Miss Sullavan's style also places her at a further disadvantage, at least in this role. Her feeling is all for the delicate and touching; as an actress, she lacks extravagance of temperament. And while her fragile sensibility perpetually illumines the play (I am thinking, for example, of the beautiful skill with which she defines whole areas of feeling about her husband and her lover), it cannot be denied that Mr. Rattigan has made rather more stringent demands.

It is in the third act that Miss Sullavan reveals what power she has been keeping in reserve. In her neurotic stance, the disintegration of her expression, the terrible immobility with which she responds to her husband's embrace, or the savage arch of her body when she realizes her young man is gone, there is a passion and morbid eroticism which could never spring from technique alone. Nothing is false in this performance, nothing evaded; indeed, the impression left by Miss Sullavan and "The Deep Blue Sea" is formidable. (*At the Morosco.*)

THE MILLIONAIRESS

"I SAY, Archer, my God, what women!" The speaker was Robert Louis Stevenson, the audience William Archer, and the subject a dramatization of *Cashel Byron's Profession,* one of Bernard Shaw's early novels. But the sentiment is one which Miss Katharine Hepburn's playing of "The Millionairess" might quite legitimately provoke. Speaking exactly, what Miss Hepburn provides for the delectation of visitors to the Shubert is a spectacle. Her entrances are the minor eruptions of a natural force; within several moments of her first appearance, she has demolished a fine piece of furniture; her lovely gowns by Balmain seem in constant danger of disintegration; the highlight of the second scene is a judo match in which Mr. Cyril Ritchard comes to grief. On occasion, Miss Hepburn almost gives the impression of training for the next Olympics.

How can an actress of this distinction ever have assumed that so disastrous an exhibition is an adequate substitute for the intelligent reading of a part? Watching Miss Hepburn (and it is impossible not to) is not an experience but an obsession; the sight of her incredibly arched back, her drawn mouth and the distended cords of her throat alternately induces irritation, repul-

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sion and a kind of pity. Not since Miss Judith Anderson assaulted Medea has the art of acting been so tragically confused with the violent and self-indulgent exercise of personal eccentricity.

It is one of the subtler contemporary ironies that our distinguished British allies should have succumbed so readily to this display of theatrical gymnastics. And those who resisted the attack (on both sides of the Atlantic) were quick to exonerate Miss Hepburn, seeing in her performance only a stratagem to disguise the inadequacies of an inferior play. But I submit that in the present production Miss Hepburn's wilful personal imposition has effectively obscured any possibility of a legitimate critical interpretation.

No one has claimed for "The Millionairess" more than small distinction. But even secondary Shaw is enormously stimulating, and there is currently on our stage nothing more worthy of attention than certain portions of this play. The work itself is essentially a kind of charade—an erratic, volatile meditation on the disposition of power in contemporary society. Shaw's protagonist is a young woman of ferocious energy, whose passage through life is littered with moral debris. The material world, and even the human world, exist only as so much matter to be shaped by her will. She is that thorn in the democratic flesh, the "born boss," the creature whose natural element is power, and Shaw regards her with a thoroughly characteristic blend of repulsion and awe.

Like all the meditations of the very old, "The Millionairess" is discursive. Age diminished neither Shaw's energy nor the irony with which he contemplated society; what declined, rather, was the ability to organize his vision and endow it with the tension of art. His later plays are like pools, milky and opaque, in which one senses something hidden, wreckage perhaps, possibly treasure. But Miss Hepburn and her director, Mr. Michael Benthall, have felt no necessity to attempt to clarify the atmosphere. He has reduced the play—an intellectual farce—to its lowest dimensions. And Miss Hepburn, in a more crucial, even humiliating, failure, has missed entirely the central insight of the drama: Shaw's perception that power is lonely, spawning only sterility and disaster, and destined to break itself always on the durable rocks of affection and love. Miss Hepburn plays the millionairess with raw and strident emphasis, blotting out the tragic grain. But when the moment of pathos comes—when all her human relationships have failed, and the millionairess turns on her doltish, happy husband crying *why* — sympathy quite eludes Miss Hepburn, she cannot command it. All that is fine and sensitive has been sacrificed to the exigencies of a performance which, while it ravages the sensibilities, never finds the secret, devious passage to the heart.

RICHARD HAYES.

THE SCREEN

THE UGLY DUCKLING

ONCE upon a time there was a cobbler who could stitch a mean boot but preferred to make up and tell stories. The young fry in the village of Odense where he lived were most enthusiastic about both the cobbler and his stories, but the elders took a pretty dim view of the whole thing and thought their kids should spend their time in school. So Hans, for that was the cobbler's name, went to Copenhagen where he was delighted with the place and people. "That's the nice thing about the world: people are so nice," said Hans. Then he fell head-over-heels in love with a beautiful ballerina; but Hans didn't think her husband was so nice because he was also her ballet director and sometimes when they were having temperamental quarrels he slapped her face. So Hans dreamed a lovely dream in which he married the ballerina and rescued her from this ogre.

In real life Hans was too bashful to declare his love, so he wrote *The Little Mermaid* story for the ballerina. And she and her husband (with whom she was very much in love) turned its fish-out-of-water theme into a stunning ballet. On the morning after its successful opening night in Copenhagen, the cobbler came to his loved one with a lot of ballet shoes he had made for her; and then he awoke to hard reality. In their own love and happiness the ballerina and her husband didn't laugh at Hans, but they did pity him. And he sadly went back to Odense where he was now accepted and where he was now happy telling stories that made other people happy.

This little fairy tale about the great spinner of fairy tales is the plot of "Hans Christian Andersen," and once you get adjusted to the fact that the film is not a biography of the great writer you'll find it a perfectly charming movie. It was decorated by Producer Samuel Goldwyn in his best style with attractive Technicolor that fits the mood of the piece. In writing the script, Moss Hart dropped his usual sophistication but injected enough sly humor and clever lines to keep the rather sweet story from getting too sweet. And Frank Loesser wrote some gay songs that hit a happy medium between his "Guys and Dolls" numbers and his "Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition." No doubt we shall be hearing a great deal of these songs that retell the tales about the ugly duckling, the inch worm, Thumbelina and "the king in the altogether."

But perhaps the biggest surprise in "Hans Christian Andersen" is the restrained and utterly winning performance of Danny Kaye. Gone is the double-talk stuff in this new Kaye who is poignant and gay, thoughtful and fey. I'm sure any objections that the Danes

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may have had when they heard he was playing their national hero will be dispelled when they see him.

And the cast surrounding Kaye is excellent: Jeanmaire, in her first movie, shows she can act as well as dance, in the role of the tempestuous ballerina with whom Hans falls in love; Farley Granger comes through well as her handsome husband; Joey Walsh gives a fine sensitive performance as Hans' young assistant who tries so hard to save the idealistic story-teller from reality and heartbreak; and the supporting cast serves effectively as listeners when Danny sings tales and as performers in the handsome ballet numbers.

"The Little Mermaid," which has a choreography by Roland Petit, who also dances the Prince loved by the Mermaid (Jeanmaire), runs for seventeen minutes and is a visual and auditory treat. The Liszt music, the excellent dancing and the lovely colors unite to form a ballet-in-cinema that is the highlight of the movie. But for me the most moving scene is the one in which Danny Kaye sings "The Ugly Duckling" to a little boy who is the butt of the other kids' jokes because his head was shaved after an illness. Director Charles Vidor, who handles his cast well throughout the movie, directs his camera in this scene on some swans floating on a pond, on Danny as he sings and on the grotesque child whose expression changes from abject misery to understanding and contentment. That scene epitomizes the spirit and charm of the movie.

THERE are a couple of other new good movies this week, more limited in appeal perhaps, but well worth your attention. "Leonardo Da Vinci" is a documentary planned and produced in Europe by Leonid Kipnis and Herman Starr. Actually it is a biography of this genius of the Renaissance told through shots of the places where he lived in Italy and France and through his works.

Leonardo Da Vinci has been called "the universal man," and, no doubt, rightly so, but this film concentrates on the sketches and inventions, and again and again one is astonished at the man's knowledge and invention. Marcel Brion's commentary, exceedingly well read by Albert Dekker, accompanies the beautiful visuals, which are in color.

AND if your interest runs to exploration, I don't have to tell you to be sure to see "Under the Red Sea." This fascinating picture photographed by Dr. Han Haas and co-workers starts at Port Sudan and takes you into marine wonderlands that are full of thrills. With a running commentary that is well stocked with humor as well as awe ("To fish, man is just another fish."), the camera explores the depths of the Red Sea and includes all kinds of wet surprises to make you sit up and take notice. Even more exciting than the beautiful coral formations, the battle with a manta ray or the discovery of a Turkish slave ship, were the experiments with the fish's reactions to sound. You may feel a little claustrophobic after being under the water so long, but you won't find a dull moment in your tour "Under the Red Sea."

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

COMMUNICATIONS

"STRANGERS IN THE CITY"

San German, Puerto Rico

TO the Editors: Deep gratification is always felt, especially by those of us who voluntarily come to work here in Puerto Rico, whenever an article appears which asks for understanding and consideration for the people of Puerto Rico. It is especially gratifying to read an article such as "Strangers in the City" (The Commonweal, Oct. 10, 1952) which shows a keen understanding of an alien people, a most difficult task at best. It is here that most articles on Puerto Ricans fail, much to the loss of the interested reader, and The Commonweal should be congratulated for giving its readers such an accurate analysis.

Quite correctly, emphasis throughout the article is on the desperate poverty which is to be found in Puerto Rico. The people of the United States are, indeed, a very wealthy people, and so it is difficult for them to understand what is meant by the term 'desperate poverty.' The most recent statistics produced by the government of Puerto Rico show that seventy-five per cent of the families in Puerto Rico have an income under $1000 a year. What is even more alarming is that forty-four per cent of the families on this island subsist on an income which is less than $500 a year.

This is a crowded island, perhaps even more so than Mr. O'Gara could point out. One hundred miles long and thirty-five miles wide (almost the size of Connecticut), Puerto Rico is burdened with a population of approximately two and a quarter million people. The population density of over six hundred per square mile is very close to that of India and China. But the sad part of the story is that the island of Puerto Rico is still smaller than the statistics show. This island is referred to by geologists as a "mass of volcanic debris." Actually, the level and fertile lands best for cane production are along the coasts, in some of the larger valleys, and over the smaller hilltops. A good part of Puerto Rico is composed of a mountainous spine, providing great scenic beauty, but an expensive beauty in an agricultural society possessing a one-crop economy. Sugar still is, in Puerto Rico, the very essence of life itself.

Whenever the resources of a given area cannot sustain

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its human element we have what is termed 'overpopulation.' Puerto Rico, with its one-crop agricultural economy, cannot sustain a population of 2,250,000. It can be readily understood, then, why rice is the basic staple in the Puerto Rican diet. And for thousands of families it is just plain rice, especially at this time of the year.

What is this time of the year? The cane-cutting season lasts from January to June. By October a great majority of the families have little or no money left, and the last stretch, from October to January, is often referred to as the "season of death." Tuberculosis is still the great killer in Puerto Rico, and malnutrition is basic to the virulency of this disease. The swollen bellies of little children are the more tragic visible signs of a persistent and nagging year-round hunger.

According to the latest available statistics, about seventy-five per cent of the cane workers are employed for approximately one hundred and seventy-five days out of the year, and about twenty-five per cent for approximately one hundred days. The *jibaro,* working in the fields for five and a half days under an exhausting sun, will make about $24 a week, but only for a period of from five to six months, which accounts for the annual income of less than $500. The result is that sixty-two percent of the population have less than the amount needed to purchase a minimum adequate diet, which is estimated at $140 a year.

There are, of course, other industries in Puerto Rico, but these industries do not provide enough work at present to absorb the manpower of this island. At the rate which the population is increasing (it is expected that the present figure will have doubled by 1985), and the present rate of industrialization, it is most difficult to foresee any appreciable alleviation in the very near future.

There are some who, in their lack of understanding, would have you believe that the poverty of Puerto Rico is the result of "American imperialist exploitation." This is not true, of course, although a greater interest in Puerto Rico by the people of the United States could help to improve upon the situation. The government of the United States has already poured more than $50 billion into Puerto Rico since 1898. It would be false to state that American businessmen do not come down here to take advantage of the low wages paid to workers, but the American taxpayer has had to pay back, in one form or another, the profits from such exploitation. Such, always, has been the pattern of colonialism.

For the careful observer, there is no question about the fact that if the Puerto Rican is being exploited by anyone on his native island, it is by his fellow Puerto Rican. It is generally true that the Puerto Rican people much prefer to work for 'continentals,' and not only because they receive greater compensation for their work, but because they receive far better treatment. It is the rising middle-class which is by far the harshest, as a group, with their fellow Puerto Ricans, and for quite understandable reasons. This is, of course, a problem which is world-wide and not characteristically Puerto Rican.

The government of Puerto Rico has worked hard to attract American capital, but the government has not always had the cooperation of local businessmen, and the solution to this problem is a difficult one indeed. In talking to some investors here, this writer has found that local merchants and politicians are quite adept in placing all kinds of obstacles in the way of the American investor. And many have returned to the United States discouraged, much to the detriment of the Puerto Rican economy.

One of the more unfortunate aspects of the economic relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States is that the island is not allowed to refine more than a small percentage of its sugar production. This means that the sugar on the table here might very well have been originally produced in Hawaii. Puerto Rican industry will really get a boost when this situation is rectified. The transfer of the refining process can be done carefully, with little discomfort to the American people, and with great benefit to a people who are not so fortunate in the wealth of their resources.

If the American people really fear an 'invasion' from Puerto Rico, they might very well help to avoid this fear by making a contribution toward the alleviation of the causes of this 'invasion.' Puerto Rico is a beautiful island, and the great majority of those who are forced to leave would prefer to stay. But when they hear that one can, by merely washing dishes or sweeping floors, earn in a week what is earned here in one or two months of work, it is little wonder that the streets of the United States seem to them to be paved with green paper, if not with gold. Imagine what hope the United States holds for a man with a family who, here in Puerto Rico, walks into a grocery and asks for three cents worth of cigarettes, seven cents worth of rice, and five cents worth of coffee.

It is only fair to state, however, that there is already a great deal of work being accomplished by interested persons and agencies in the United States. Many of us had the opportunity to associate this past summer with teachers and welfare workers, persons who came to Puerto Rico to understand better the people with whom they are daily concerned. On the whole they seemed dedicated to their work, and possessed a real sympathy and understanding for the problems and customs of the people of Puerto Rico. They greatly deserve public recognition for the wonderful work they are doing, and most certainly need whatever support they can get, for they cannot accomplish the task alone.

CHARLES W. TOTH,
Professor of History,
Polytechnic Institute of Puerto Rico

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The Minor Ivy Leagues

THE DISGUISES OF LOVE. By Robie Macauley. Random House. $3.

By NICHOLAS JOOST

WHAT Mary McCarthy's *The Groves of Academe* did to (and for) the academic advance-guard, Robie Macauley's comparable first novel does to (but hardly for) the academic middle class—the professor and his family whose status in the world of the privately endowed university is that of the prosperous American businessman in America at large.

The Disguises of Love concerns that most hackneyed of student-teacher relationships: the teacher and the student fall in love. This time the teacher is Howard Graeme, a professor in the psychology department of Creston University, a middle-sized school in southern Michigan. The student is a worldly blonde named Frances. Their affair and its effect on Professor Graeme's wife Helen and their sixteen-year-old son Gordon—and, rather incidentally, on the college community—constitute the central situation. Except for one chapter in which students and teachers discuss, much in the manner of a Greek chorus, what goes on in the Graeme household, we learn what goes on as Howard, Helen, and Gordon in turn recount each stage of the story.

Unless the reader has lived and worked in a fairly large, fairly conservative university community which dominates a small town, much as he undoubtedly will be amused by *The Disguises of Love* he probably will not savor to the full Mr. Macauley's picture of Creston and its denizens. As one who has been through it all, this reviewer can testify to the picture's alarming accuracy: the professor's musical evening, where everybody screams departmental shop talk above the blast of Hindu folksong and German *Lieder,* played LP; the professor who, as the English department's Lawrence Olivier, compulsively rants through all the parts of *Lear* in his drama survey; the Hokinson-esque tea given by and for faculty wives—and at which protocol is stricter than at a UN banquet; the professor's brat who puts sneezing powder on the cake at his birthday party—but who is a genius.

Gordon Graeme, the professor's brat of this novel, is Mr. Macauley's standard of judgment, one gathers. Fat, sloppy, misunderstood, unloved, Gordon poses as the typical American boy—reader of comic books, maker of uncouth noises, player of practical jokes. Underneath this disguise, impenetrable to his parents, Gordon reads his Spengler, listens to his music, and keeps a notebook worthy of André Walter himself. And yet, despite Gordon's redoubtable brilliance, he cannot penetrate the disguises that his parents also wear: he suspects not his father, but his mother, of infidelity. Is Mr. Macauley "telling" us something when he makes Gordon, in rebellion against the materialism of Howard's behavioristic psychology, become an esthete?

The question brings up the real horror of the book, a very real horror that accompanies and is not always submerged by its unabashedly comic satire. The life of this community is secular, the lives of these people are bounded by art, anthropology, psychology (usually of the experimental variety), chemistry, physics, even, dimly, by philosophy. Gordon rebels because he wants to find his own, original relation to his context and, of course, turns to its esthetic aspects in his search. For, however else disguised, in this world love has no theological dimension. That is the horror. Here are no groves, but a wasteland.

A Declaration of Independence

THE REPUBLIC AND THE PERSON. By Gordon Keith Chalmers. Regnery. $4.

By BERNARD IDDINGS BELL

DR. Chalmers, who has made Kenyon one of the better small colleges, here deals with what he believes are "necessities in American education." What is fundamentally wrong, he thinks, is the domination of current education by the "disintegrated liberalism" of the first half of this century. There has been increasing disregard of norms, a supposedly necessary inconstancy about any changeless relationship of man to God, about right and wrong, about good and evil, with less and less concern about the good life and a turning of attention to merely instrumental knowledge. Dr. Chalmers observes that there is a revolt against all this among educational leaders, a revolt as yet not widespread and thorough but plainly visible and growing.

The errors to be corrected, Dr. Chalmers maintains, are derivative from the following "liberal" notions: 1) men are so rational that the passions may be ignored; 2) the only reasoning appropriate to human affairs is scientific reasoning; 3) because man is by nature good, it follows that all that is wrong with us is our defective social arrangements; 4) all scholarship should be as "objective" and morally irresponsible as Science; 5) letters are not concerned with adult judgment; 6) a "moral writer" is merely an advocate of some party line; 7) excellence in letters is a matter not of what you say but only of how you say it.

Add to this an unwillingness of the schools to teach the discipline of thinking, and the result is that we are a people increasingly incapable of directing our individual lives or our society according to that norm of human purpose which the race has discovered. Our task is to rescue education from these mistakes, mistakes of which John Dewey was archprophet. They poison our education from kindergarten through graduate school, and beyond.

All of this is so true that one wishes he could recommend Dr. Chalmer's book without reservation;

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but this reviewer can not do that.

The first trouble is that the author continually digresses into subjects only imperfectly related by him to his main thesis. This confuses and distracts. Secondly, he too constantly quotes other people, often at length. It is as though he is not sure of the positions to which his thought has led him unless he can back himself up by quoting many other people who take similar positions. This gets to be very vexing indeed. Thirdly, he too much uses a sort of "intellectual language" not understood by many except educational philosophers. If he wishes to convert only such persons, this does not matter; but surely what is more required is to convert the general public. What is needed is more of what the French call *haute vulgarisation,* to address the thoughtful man whose specialism is in other than one's own peculiar field. Because of these faults, the book is hard to read.

The author's attitude toward Religion and Education is worth looking at. One never seems quite sure whether Religion means to him more than a magnanimity that can be humanly arrived at. One suspects that Dr. Chalmers is growing toward a recognition of much more than this, but that he has a good way still to go. He seems sure that publicly owned schools and colleges must continue to ignore Religion. If Religion is as important as Dr. Chalmers seems to think it is, this is hard on the eighty-eight per cent who must attend state-supported institutions.

Religious education would seem to be only for those who go to parochial schools and private church colleges. But when Roman Catholics conform to this idea, it seems to vex Dr. Chalmers, who regards Catholicism as scarcely more than superstition and as alien to the American *geist*. He would like more Protestant schools and colleges. These he deems more American somehow. Why, he asks, are there so few reputable Protestant schools and colleges and no first-rate committedly Protestant university? He misses the obvious answer, namely that Protestantism is almost hope-

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lessly confused within itself in respect to belief and ideology. What is Protestantism? It would be interesting to have Dr. Chalmers define it.

Despite faults, this is a notable book by a man of integrity and ideas.

Defense of Reason

REASON AND ANTI-REASON IN OUR TIME. By Karl Jaspers. Yale. $2.

By JAMES V. MULLANEY

"THERE is no common ground among contemporary philosophers." For this reason Jaspers attempts in this little book to "rediscover a common ground" in "the self-evident faculty of Reason."

The first essay, "The Challenge of the Scientific Method," postulates that science is "the condition of all truth in philosophy itself . . . We profess an unconditional belief in modern science as the way to truth." In the name of science, the two most successful "pseudo-sciences" of our time, Marxism and psychoanalysis, are criticized severely and at length, as "the untruth of total knowledge and pseudo-mythical objectivization."

The second essay, "Reason," is the heart of the book. It describes reason first in itself, and then as achieved "by decision," the decision "to think for oneself, and this is the beginning of serious responsibility." In itself, reason "has no assured stability: it is constantly on the move. Once it has gained a position it presses on to criticize it and is therefore opposed to the tendency to free oneself from the necessity for all further thought by once and for all accepting irrevocably fixed ideas . . . Truth lies . . . in a process of continuous questioning and critical appropriation."

The third and final essay. "Reason in Its Struggle," is a criticism of the hazily identified enemies of reason. The only unambiguous section is the critique of religion, of the believers "who hold unshakably fast to the Absurd."

With this volume a great contemporary thinker restores reason to its central place in philosophy. This is all the more significant since Karl Jaspers is heir both to post-Kantian German philosophy and to the existentialist reaction to it.

Inevitably, there are reservations. They center around one question: what kind of reason is it which Jaspers offers as a common ground to philosophers?

First, it is a self-enclosed reason. Jaspers, passionate pleader for the openness of reason, closes reason to any truth above itself. This is done by the simple device of unobtrusively bracketing together, under "Anti-Reason," six categories: the non-rational, the unrational, the irrational, the anti-rational, the infra-rational and the supra-rational. It is probable that some of these categories are identical; it is certain that others are distinct. The whole question merits minute investigation. Jaspers, the anti-dogmatist, simply dogmatizes that whatever is not reason is anti-reason—an irrational rationalism.

Second, it is a reason very much in love with the pursuit of truth, but with a horror of the possession of truth. Jaspers exalts reason (through which we contemplate *being*)—an anti-intellectual rationalism. Behind his contempt for achieved truth is an aversion for immutability. Behind that aversion, in turn, is an ancient confusion of the immutability of inertia with the immutability of plentitude. To cut reason and philosophy off from the contemplation of the mystery of being—Jaspers abhors mystery, of course—is to deny philosophy its starting point.

Third, out of Jaspers' reason, ever on the move but never having a home, emerges his pronounced scientism and instability. He now rejects the existentialist label. His is "the philosophy of reason," not "the philosophy of existence." He even speaks now of "the Perennial Philosophy"—a term which Mr. Huxley has rendered as meaningless as "Existentialism." Since no rational position can be final, Jaspers must evolve out of the philoso-

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phy of reason as surely as he evolved out of the philosophy of existence. It would perhaps be novel to evolve simply into philosophy, and not into another "philosophy of —."

These reservations must be balanced by an acknowledgement of what is valid in this work. Jaspers *has* embraced reason. Reason may be counted on to assert in the end its own nature, regardless of what restriction the philosopher may try to place on it. The openness of reason to the supra-rational, intellectual contemplation of achieved truth as the term of rational inquiry, the merely instrumental character of science in philosophic thought—these are points which, given a commitment to reason, must eventually become clear. Jaspers' present position cannot be final. He must go on to accept all that reason implies, or reject reason altogether.

Again, reason as we experience it is indeed very like reason as Jaspers has described it. For the most part our intellectual life is a pursuit, not a possession in which we may rest. What one quarrels with is this: that Jaspers' anti-dogmatism should itself be so dogmatic. To make the possession of truth antirational, as Jaspers does, is at least as false as the dogmatism he criticizes—the simple dogmatism which pretends prematurely to the possession of final truth.

Eva Peron

THE WOMAN WITH THE WHIP. By Maria Flores. Doubleday. $3.50.

By LULU' VARGAS VILA

SELDOM has this reviewer approached a book with more interest than in the present case. Unfortunately, the volume leaves a feeling of disappointment, and perhaps unjustly so. It is, in effect, a conscientious and honest effort to present the facts of Eva Peron's life and works, but the result is dull, something of a compilation in one volume of the newspaper material published over the past eight years.

The author is well informed as to what has taken place in Argentine politics since the advent of the Perons, and succeeds in spinning a neat, chronological little yarn of these events, from the June 4th, 1943 revolution, through the ensuing dictatorship. It contains all the information that is more or less public knowledge to anyone who has been following the situation in that country, and as such might be considered worthwhile reading. It is as a biography (which it purports to be) of that spectacular, inflammable and unpredictable woman known as "Evita" to our world, that the book fails.

Whether you paint her as a she-devil or as a spirit possessed, it is impossible to describe her in the mild terms that Miss Flores has done, without any evaluation of her acts, and still give your reader any measure of Eva Peron's personality. There is implied drama in the bare outline of the story of that Maria Eva Duarte de Peron who, born out of wedlock in a forlorn town, rises to unbridled power, through a mediocre stage and radio career, to fan the fury of the poor against the rich,

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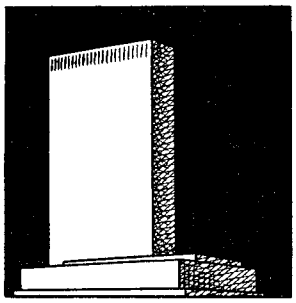

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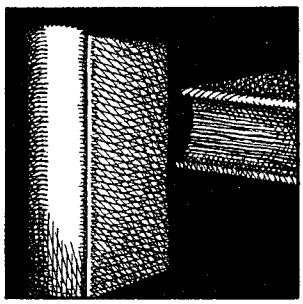

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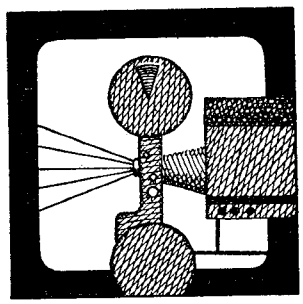

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to seek and take revenge of any slights to her person, imaginary or real, to dress like a fairy-godmother, to amass a fortune, to break men's careers, to flaunt her jewels and play at Lady Bountiful to the underprivileged. But this drama is lost in the weaving of that life into the pattern of political events.

The author has uncovered no new facts about Eva Peron's life. No light is cast on any of the enigmas surrounding her, such as: Did the woman herself hold "the whip," or was she a tool of Peron? The author seems to have leaned over backwards not to reach any conclusions herself, and in so doing has weakened her story considerably.

REVIEWERS

Nicholas Joost is an assistant professor of English at Loyola University, Chicago, and an editor of *Poetry* magazine.

Rev. Bernard Iddings Bell is a Canon of the Episcopal Cathedral in Chicago and student counselor at the University of Chicago. His latest book is "Crowd Culture."

James V. Mullaney teaches philosophy at Manhattan College.

Lulu Vargas Vila, who now lives in Greenwich, Connecticut, resided for some time in Argentina.

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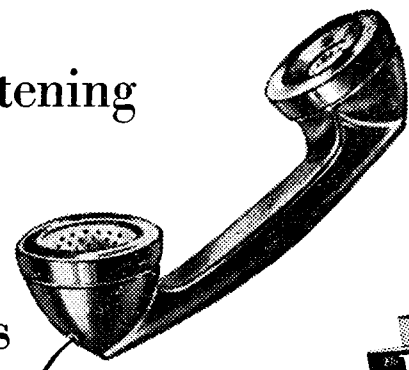

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